



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Critical Notes

A NEW INTERPRETATION OF JOB¹

A new translation and an introduction—this, as the full title indicates, and not a new commentary on the Book of Job, constitutes Professor Jastrow's new volume. The translation, it is true, is accompanied by a marginal analysis and by footnotes; but though the latter occasionally contain explanatory matters they are mostly concerned with indications of the text followed, with alternative emendations, and with detailed notes on the structure of the book, the general principles of which have been discussed in the Introduction.

The book, as the Foreword distinctly states and as the decorated cover suggests, is intended primarily for the general reader; and it may be said at once that the author has in the Introduction with great skill so presented a highly complicated and very detailed theory of the origin of the book that unprofessional readers of the book may read it with pleasure and profit. But though intended for the general reader, and though in his interest much that in a full commentary would have been expressed is omitted, underlying the Introduction and translation, barely indicated or not indicated at all, are conclusions reached on innumerable points during the many years which the author has devoted to the Book of Job. In this periodical it will be in place to examine some of these conclusions rather than to dwell more fully on the more general aspects of the work. Yet there is one disadvantage in so doing: it will give undue prominence to the points in which I disagree. Let me then say at the outset that though I frequently disagree with Professor Jastrow on details and occasionally on larger matters, this does not in any way diminish my appreciation of his very suggestive work, my regret that it was not before me before my own Commentary had been completed and passed out of my hands, or the warmth with which I commend the new work to the attention and careful study of the student.

Professor Jastrow observes that a modern book is completed before it begins its life, but that an ancient book is dead as soon as the last word has been added to it; additions were always being made to an ancient book so long as it excited any interest, and only ceased to be made when interest vanished, i.e., when the book had died. This is a striking way of saying what is true of much ancient literature, and what may be, indeed is in a measure, true of Job. Yet it is an overstatement to say that "in the ancient

¹Morris Jastrow, Jr., *The Book of Job. Its Origin, Growth, and Interpretation, Together with a New Translation Based on a Revised Text.* Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1920. 369 pages. \$4.00.

Orient the final form of a composition represents a dead book" (p. 65), for the Pentateuch was a living and potential force in its final form, and some part or parts of the existing book, in other words, some product of oriental literary activity, must first exist and so far be complete before there is anything to which additions, testifying to its living interest, can be made; and indeed such an earlier complete book of Job, Professor Jastrow finds in chapters 1-27 and a third speech of Job now lost (p. 297), and 42:7-9. But I refer to this part of the Introduction less to criticize it than to express my fundamental agreement with it—an agreement which is likely to be shared by most students who come to the study of it. The existing book was preceded by an earlier book or earlier books of Job which were enlarged and modified. But what was the nature of the earlier books? What in detail the processes of addition and modification to which they were subject? As to these questions there is room for, and there will certainly be, differences of opinion.

Briefly described, Professor Jastrow's theory is that the Book of Job is the result of the contributions of an indefinite number of the members of two different circles—a skeptical circle and an orthodox circle. The skeptical circle found in circulation an old story of Job expressing a naïve faith in God, and used it for their own skeptical ends as "a peg on which to hang the discussion of the problem involved in Job's sufferings" (p. 27); their discussion gradually took literary form in the colloquies of the present book (chaps. 3-27) to which the prologue was prefixed (1,2), and a brief epilogue (42:7b-9) was added. In this form the book scandalized the orthodox, who at various times took various ways to make it less scandalous or to secure that their own point of view should be put with equal effectiveness. Thus (1) they made Job at the end of the colloquies go back on what he had said and say what the three friends had orthodoxly said, by the simple device of attributing to Job what the original book had placed in the mouths of Bildad and Šophar (chaps. 26 and 27); (2) they added first various poems by various authors that make up the speeches of Elihu, and *subsequently* (p. 144) the various poems that make up the speeches of Yahweh; (3) they transformed crucial passages (e.g., 13:15, 16; 19:25-27) so that they came to express the opposite to what they had originally expressed. Now as to these suggestions it is possible here only to say briefly, (1) that there are very strong reasons for ascribing parts of chapters 26 and 27 to Šophar and Bildad, but it is by no means certain that the present state of the text is due to deliberate modification rather than to accidental mutilations; (2) that the speeches of Elihu are certainly additions, but that even if the speeches of Yahweh are also such the assumption that they were added to the book *after* the speeches of Elihu is exposed to some of the objections that tell strongly against the originality of the speeches of Elihu; in particular 38:2 and 3 imply that it is Job that has just ceased speaking, and leave no room for Elihu: in other words, speeches of Elihu

came into the book *after*, and not before, 38:2,3; (3) that there are passages that have been modified so as to blunt the boldness of the original text is probable, not to say certain, but in this matter all turns on the nature of the evidence for assuming such modification in the particular instances.

To bring out the extreme complexity of Professor Jastrow's theory of the growth of the book, it should be added that he considers that the third cycle of speeches (chaps. 22-27) is a later addition to the first two, and perhaps the second cycle an earlier addition to the first; that chapters 29-31 are due (except in so far as they contain misplaced fragments from Šophar's third speech and Job's reply to Bildad's third speech) to someone who felt moved to write speeches for Job of a different character from those that precede—not, however, from any orthodox standpoint, but merely for the interest of the thing; that the prose introduction to the speeches of Elihu, consisting of five verses, is the work of as many different hands; and that several hands are represented in the epilogues.

Much of this analysis turns on the assumed incompatibility of purpose and belief in different parts of the book. In this respect the symposium (chaps. 3-27), it is alleged, differs from the old story retold in the prologue: the speeches of Elihu and the speeches of Yahweh and of Job's reply to these, from the symposium. Now of course the feature of the book most obvious from any point of view is that it presents opposed points of view which, if we will, we may with Professor Jastrow call the orthodox and the skeptical; but the expression of these opposed points of view cannot in itself be any indication of multiple authorship, for it belongs to the very nature of the symposium: Job is skeptical, the friends are orthodox. If we are to infer diversity of authorship, it must be because in different parts of the book there is an implied radical difference of attitude on the part of different *authors* toward the two points of view expressed. In the symposium the sympathy of the author is with Job and against the friends: in the speeches of Elihu it may be said to be with Elihu and against Job: is the same to be said of the speeches of Yahweh? To answer this it becomes necessary to define the nature and extent of the skepticism and corresponding orthodoxy involved; the skepticism of the book is not general, affecting the whole range of thought and conduct, but special: it is pre-eminently skepticism with regard to the prevalent belief that all suffering is recompense for sin. At times this is clearly seen and put by Professor Jastrow: e.g., on page 314, note 66, "The original purpose of the Book of Job was to show the untenability of the conventional view that only the wicked suffer in this world, and that the good enjoy the blessings of God as long as they live." On page 52, this fundamentally negative character of Job is stated in more questionable terms, when it is said that "the main theme of the symposium" is "that sufferings in this world are not *always* due to just causes, that the divine power which controls the destinies of nature and of mankind does not work under the inflexible law of ethical standards." And on page 33, instead

of the negative, a wide positive purpose is attributed to the book, or more precisely the skeptical circle out of which it sprang; it is "a general discussion of the reason for suffering and evil in the world": and a still more general skepticism is implicitly attributed to the book on page 168; here we are told that the speeches of Yahweh contain the "final answer of orthodox circles to Job's questionings. Man should desist from the effort of trying to understand God's mysterious ways." The implication here is that Job's had been a general skepticism extending to all God's mysterious ways; but it had not been this; fundamentally Job's skepticism was with regard not to God at all, but to a particular dogma about God, and only secondarily and on the assumption that that dogma is true, does it extend more generally to the actual ways of God. It may be argued, I think, that where and as it stands, the speech of Yehweh *tacitly* justifies this particular skepticism of Job. In any case neither in what Yahweh says nor in what Job says in reply, is there anything that represents dissent from what Job had maintained throughout the symposium, namely, that his sufferings are not due to sin, and that, therefore, the theory maintained by the friends is false. This speech (or speeches) of Yahweh presents some at least superficial difficulties on any view of the book, but as the "final answer of orthodox circles" decidedly greater difficulties than on some others. Nor does it seem to me in any degree probable that the words of Yahweh consist of a number of independent nature poems which had originally no connection with the book. It is possible, as Professor Jastrow suggests, that if the book had reached us without this speech of Yahweh and that speech had been discovered elsewhere, no one would have thought of fitting it into Job; on the other hand, (1) the book without some such speech is incomplete—I have argued the point elsewhere and cannot do it again here—and (2) if the speech of Yahweh had reached us independently, it would have been immediately suggested and agreed that it was a part of some larger work. The challenging questions which so largely compose it are most effective where they stand, but would not be natural in a completely detached poem.

I can but refer in a word or two to Professor Jastrow's treatment of the prologue. Rightly, in my judgment, he refuses to postulate a *Volksbuch* of Job, allowing that such *may* have existed, though the assumption of a *Volksage* is sufficient. Rightly, again, he declines to eliminate the scenes in heaven from the prologue, and very admirably argues that in them in particular a touch of skepticism appears which links the prologue closely with the symposium. On the other hand, the attribution of "callousness" to Yahweh seems to rest on an imperfect appreciation of the limitations imposed by the subject and method of the book; and in representing, as some have done before him, the sufferings of Job as "due to a wager" he is merely importing into the prologue what is not there.

On the important question of the early Greek version, Professor Jastrow seems to speak in the Introduction and translation with two voices. In the

Introduction he quite clearly indicates his adhesion to the theory maintained by Hatch and Bickell, that the omissions of the Greek are proof of the existence of an originally shorter Book of Job; but, while much that is present in the Greek version is omitted from the translation, as "superfluous lines, briefer comments and glosses" (p. 107), the omissions of the Greek are for the most part retained—sometimes in square brackets, sometimes without, sometimes noted in the annotations, sometimes not. For example, 18:15^b, 16; 27:21–23; 37:1–5^a, are instances of passages omitted in the Greek but retained in the translation without any indication that, according to the theory adopted in the Introduction, they are additions to the original text. The omission of 22:13–16 is registered in the note, but the verses are retained in the translation, and only the last is inclosed in square brackets. Again, 14:18 and 19 are retained in brackets in the translation; the omission of verse 19 is registered, but not that of verse 18. Of 28:27, retained unbracketed in the translation, but said in the note to be absent from the original Greek version, only the first line is actually absent; but 28:26^b, which is absent from the Greek, is retained in the translation and not referred to in the notes. In a work primarily intended for the general reader, it would be unreasonable to ask for a prolonged discussion of the Greek version; but if the omissions are noted to the extent to which they are, they might better have been fully noticed. On the whole, however, the general reader may be congratulated that Professor Jastrow's practice is in the translation to retain what his theory in the Introduction should lead him to reject.

There is another respect in which the theory of the Introduction is imperfectly applied to the translation. According to the Introduction, the poem is written in distichs of three-stressed lines, these distichs being regularly combined into quatrains or "stanzas of four lines" (p. 99). If this be so, distichs and quatrains should be clearly distinguished in the translation by inseting the second line of each distich and spacing between each set of four lines, or by some equally effective device. Unfortunately Professor Jastrow's translation, though it distinguishes the *lines* of the original, distinguishes neither the distichs nor the hypothetical quatrains: it is only possible to discover his view of what constitutes these by counting down the lines from the beginning of the speech. Now parallelism and, though at times more ambiguously, rhythm determine the limits of a distich and its division into two lines; but nothing distinguishes a quatrain except the sense: i.e., the only justification for dividing a Hebrew poem into quatrains is that successive couples of distichs are more closely bound to one another than successive single distichs or successive larger groups of distichs. In Job, as elsewhere, it no doubt often happens that two successive distichs are closely connected, but it also happens at times that *three* successive distichs are as closely connected, or that in a considerable series of distichs any *single* distich is as little or as closely connected with its neighbors as any other. For this reason I regard it as a pure delusion that Job was written in

quatrains, though in my summary reference to the matter in this *Journal* (xxxvi, 95) I do not seem to have expressed myself with sufficient clearness, for Professor Jastrow on page 105, note 73, cites me as inclining toward the quatrain theory. My view of Bickell's and Duhm's quatrains is that they do not represent a discovery of a form intended by the Hebrew author, but that they impose a form upon the poem partly by the convenient but unwarranted process of dropping out inconvenient distichs, and partly by boldly calling quatrains couples of distichs not intimately associated with one another. How this theory of quatrains works in Professor Jastrow's translation, or rather would be seen to work, if he had outwardly distinguished the quatrains, I must content myself with illustrating by means of a single passage—the opening of Eliphaz' second speech, 15:2-16. (I reproduce the words of Professor Jastrow's translation, but arranged so as to show the distichs and the hypothetical quatrains):

Should a wise man answer wind,
 And fill his belly with east wind?
 Reasoning without purpose,
 And with words that are of no avail?
 Just as little canst thou argue away fear of God,
 And diminish respect before God.
 When thy iniquity instructs thy mouth,
 And thou chooseth the manner of sophists,
 Thy mouth convicts thee—not He;
 Thy lips testify against thee.
 Wast thou born at the beginning?
 Brought forth before the hills?
 Hast thou overheard the secret of God?
 And hast thou monopolized wisdom?
 What dost thou know that we do not know?
 And what understanding hast thou which is not with us?
 [Elder and greybeard are among us—
 More than old enough to be thy father]
 Are consolations too small for thee,
 And the word that deals gently with thee?
 What has taken hold of thy mind?
 And why are thy eyes haughty?
 [And] thou desirest to give thy spirit back to God,
 And givest utterance to [foolish] talk?
 What is man that he should think himself pure?
 And the one born of woman that he should be innocent?
 Even his holy ones he does not trust—
 And the heavens are not pure in his sight;
 How much less one that is of low estate and impure,
 Man who drinks iniquity like water?

Now of these "quatrains," the first really consists of two closely connected distichs; if the following six all did the same, we might reasonably conclude that the poet intended to write this passage in quatrains. But the second "quatrain," as translated by Professor Jastrow, quite clearly is unreal: the first half of it belongs to what precedes, the second half to the distich that follows. The third "quatrain," however rendered, is unreal; the second distich of it has no close connection with the first, but connects pretty closely with the two following. The fourth "quatrain" might stand, except that, as just suggested, the preceding distich is about as closely connected with it as the two distichs composing it with one another. The fifth "quatrain"—I assume that the bracketed lines are to be disregarded as an insertion—may pass; but the sixth obviously at once combines the incongruous and detaches its second distich from the two following with which it is closely connected.

I find it exceedingly difficult to believe that, had Professor Jastrow distinguished his quatrains in his translation, he could have allowed the passage to stand as I have here printed it. Either he would have given up distinguishing the successive sets of four lines, i.e., he would have abandoned the theory that the poem was written in stanzas of four lines, or he would have been driven with Bickell and others to throw away distichs in order to save his theory. Bickell (German translation, 1894) rejects the first distich of the third of the quatrains above, and the second distich of the sixth as well as the lines bracketed above. This no doubt produces something less distasteful and from the point of view of form, less improbable than the above; on the other hand, both here and in many other passages, the omissions made by Bickell in the interest of quatrains are purely arbitrary.

Closely connected with the question of quatrains is that of tristichs: if the whole poem consists of quatrains, there can be no tristichs except in so far as the quatrainists are capable of redividing two *successive* tristichs and a distich (3+3+2 lines) into two sets of four lines—very simple arithmetic, but very hazardous criticism. Professor Jastrow appears to regard tristichs in Job as impossible, and in the translation, so far as I have observed, consistently removes one of the lines of apparent tristichs. In many particular cases I agree with him, for I have no doubt that the number of apparent tristichs in the existing text exceeds the number in the original text. Thus it is probable that, for example, in 5:5; 6:4; 10:3c; 10:22; 11:19; 12:3, the text has suffered from the intrusion of lines, though I do not in every case agree with Professor Jastrow as to what the probably intrusive element is. But the appearance of tristichs may arise, not only from intrusion, but also from loss or transposition of lines; transposition, if anything, is the cause of two apparent tristichs at the very opening of the poem (chap. 3:4, 5—perhaps to be rearranged, 3a, c, b, 5); not intrusion, as Professor Jastrow will have it, suggesting that "'that *day* be darkness' is a comment to 'night' to indicate that a dark *night* is meant!" (the italics are mine).

The whole question of form is ultimately this: Was it rigid, invariable? Did the lines invariably contain three stresses, no more, no less? Did the lines invariably combine into distichs, never into tristichs? Did the distichs invariably combine into quatrains? I have given reasons for questioning whether Professor Jastrow has worked out the quatrain question; but he has succeeded, so far as the length of line and the combination of lines into distichs are concerned, in securing an invariable form for the whole poem. Has he thereby recovered a uniformity such as the poet intended, or merely such a uniformity as may appeal more strongly to modern taste? With some skill it would no doubt be possible to drop one or two syllables out of all the lines in Shakespeare's plays that exceeded ten syllables, but after all, even though such an exercise might please our taste for regularity, it would deprive us of what the taste of Shakespeare approved.

In one matter of form at least, I find myself in complete agreement with Professor Jastrow. If he rejects tristichs which may actually be the work of the ancient poet, he at least does not follow Bickell and Duham in manufacturing the appearance of tristichs where no tristichs are; he is right in declining to find any formal argument for attributing the greater part of chapter 24 to any other than the author of the colloquies.

I cannot extend this already lengthy discussion by referring to the numerous passages where I should question the translation or the emendations adopted. With all his freedom in regard to tradition it is strange that Professor Jastrow follows the R.V. in retaining אֶסְלֵדָה in 6:10; "exult" no doubt suits the context, but that סִלַּח means "to exult" is the merest guess—and a very improbable one. It is preferable to emend. Does כִּמְעַט mean "E'en though," or נָשָׂא with an accusative of the *person* "to forgive" (32:32)? Is "Then I would know" a probable rendering of וְאֵנִי יִדְעָתִי (19:25), or "will arise" in the same line a legitimate paraphrase of what the note correctly says is literally "is living"? In 19:26 I consider the first line in the existing text simply unintelligible; and the rendering adopted after Ehrlich "only under *my* skin is this indited" not less improbable than previously attempted renderings. In any case the emphasis on "my" is not expressed in the Hebrew, nor is "only." A criticism of the emendations would largely be a criticism only in a secondary degree of the new volume: for in the Foreword Professor Jastrow tells us that every page of his translation is affected by Ehrlich's *Randglossen*. It is possible to join in the tribute to the memory of this scholar, and to acknowledge the frequent acuteness of his suggestions, while adopting an attitude of far greater reserve toward his work as a whole. Yet in one passage at least of some interest Professor Jastrow might perhaps safely have followed Ehrlich (and others) in preferring the Greek to the Hebrew text, and so confining Job's curse to the day of his birth (3:5).

G. BUCHANAN GRAY

MANSFIELD COLLEGE
OXFORD, ENGLAND